

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 440

By Norris

A RESOLUTION to commemorate the 100th anniversary of  
Woodstock School.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should pay tribute to those enduring institutions that serve to remind us of the societal progress we have made over the past one hundred years and the many milestones we have yet to achieve; and

WHEREAS, officially founded as the Shelby County Training School in 1913, Woodstock School was the first school in the county to offer a high school education to African Americans; the school graduated its first senior class in 1923; and

WHEREAS, in the early years, many of the school's students also boarded at the school and paid for their room and board through the "work for food" program, in which they participated in Woodstock's various agricultural endeavors; and

WHEREAS, Mr. R.J. Roddy joined the Woodstock faculty in 1920 and served with distinction as principal until he retired in 1966 and was succeeded by Mr. John E. Strong; and

WHEREAS, during its tenure as an African American high school, Woodstock School emphasized training in home economics, agriculture, industrial arts, gymnastics, and dramatics as a basis for the development, physical health, moral stability, and mental well being of the young people who constituted its student body; and

WHEREAS, Woodstock earned much acclaim during these years for its excellent glee club and chorus, which made many appearances on radio and at other events, and its boys' basketball team, which won both West Tennessee and State championships; and

WHEREAS, with the dawn of desegregation, the training school was closed in 1970 and its students transferred to Millington Central, and the campus became home to Woodstock Elementary School instead; and

WHEREAS, serving northwestern Shelby County students in grades 1-8, Woodstock was transformed from a black majority school to a white majority school by 1972; due to the compassion and diligence of Mr. Strong and his staff, the transition was a smooth one, and the school became a model of racial harmony throughout the school system; and

WHEREAS, in the summer of 2000, Woodstock was reborn again, this time as a middle school serving grades 6-8; with the help of a huge building campaign, Woodstock Middle School is now home to modern classrooms, facilities, and amenities; and

WHEREAS, from its existence as an African American high school one hundred years ago to its prominence as a contemporary middle school, Woodstock School is home to the panoramic history of Shelby County and Tennessee and tells a fascinating story of racial progress that present and future generations would do well to embrace; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we commemorate the one hundredth anniversary of Woodstock School, from its days as the Shelby County Training School for African Americans, through its thirty years as Woodstock Elementary School, up to today's outstanding Woodstock Middle School. We honor the administration, faculty, students, alumni, and parents of Woodstock, both past and present, for being an important part of this historic institution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.